

(a) Amendments to the Claims

17. (Previously amended) A procurement system for a buyer to purchase a desired item, said system comprising:

a first catalog database accessible to said buyer lacking said desired item;

B1 a second catalog database, wherein each unique catalog item stored within said second catalog is identified with respect to class, attribute, and value relationships; and

an item selection procedure, said procedure relying on said relationships to search for the desired item within said second database when it is not located within said first database.

18. (Currently amended) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein each unique catalog item stored within said first catalog database is identified with respect to said class, attribute, and value relationships.

19. (Original) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, including a special requisition identifying the desired item prepared by said buyer using said class, attribute, and value relationships; and

a master database not normally accessible to said buyer including the desired item, said special requisition being used to search for the desired item in said master database.

20. (Original) A procurement system as recited in claim 19, wherein said special requisition is forwarded to a supplier, who provides the desired item, one of said databases being updated with said desired item according to said class, attribute, and value relationships. ?

21. (Previously added) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein a search engine performs said item selection procedure.

22. (New) A procurement system as recited in claim 17, wherein said class relationships are hierarchical among classes. ? 1/2, 2nd

23. (New) A procurement system as recited in claim 22, wherein the lowest class in the hierarchy is a leaf class and said attribute relationships are between a leaf class and an attribute. 112, 2nd

24. (New) A procurement system as recited in claim 23, wherein said attributes comprise static, differentiating, and dynamic. 112, 1st

25. (New) A procurement system as recited in claim 23, wherein said value relationships are between an attribute and a value of the attribute. 112, 2nd
